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THE YOUNG PROFESSIONAL IN THE CIA

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Office of Personnel

8 March 1972

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Plans Staff, Office of Personnel

SUBJECT : The Young Professional in the CIA

A. Who is the Young Professional?

1. The label "young professional" has been used frequently in discussions by Agency officials, but not always with the same reference. Rather than cite the several possibilities suggested, I'll simply state the context to be used in this paper.

2. The young professional is that individual, seldom over 30 years of age or higher than the GS-11 level, who, having completed four years or more of college, is commencing to settle down and face the question of his occupational future. He is hired for a professional career, whether or not he is used initially in a different capacity.

B. The Pre-Employment Handicap of the Young Professional

1. The young professional by definition is somewhat unsettled. Since almost all of his prior knowledge of the Agency is gained by impressions or secondhand information, he comes to the Organization entertaining more often than not an inflated notion, even a glamorous one, of what a career with the Agency will entail. The "need to know" policy of the Agency tends to reinforce pre-employment impressions. The Agency must recognize this handicap and give the young professional time to re-orient his thoughts and not build upon attitudes which he has not had time to modify by the realities of subsequent experience. Admonition by Agency officials to the effect that Agency work often involves tedious, routine, and rather dull duties is not sufficient to preclude the need for this mental adjustment.

2. Time is the key word. It takes time for any employee to adjust to any new job. And it especially takes time for a young professional to come to appreciate the Agency's peculiarities, particularly as they relate to his own life style and aspirations. Young professionals have the extra burden of sorting out considerations which relate to their long-term career interests or occupational focus, since many will have had little meaningful work experience (other than military) before joining the Agency. Young professionals have to come to grips with establishing occupational goals, regardless of their academic orientation or substantive expertise.

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C. Agency Goals and the Flexibility of Its Personnel

1. Management has spelled out its personnel management philosophy in its current planning guidelines. It anticipates a future where the need for and response to challenge will grow markedly. Management believes that:

a. Employees should be hopeful and optimistic about their future careers with the Agency.

b. Attitudes of employees, particularly new employees, should be known; fresh and creative thinking continues to be needed.

c. Talents should not be permitted to lie fallow, and incompetency should never be rewarded.

2. With further reductions in Agency strength possible and the need to be especially frugal increasingly apparent, the Organization must make more efficient use of its personnel to meet its responsibilities.

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will have to broaden his competency and refine or develop new analytic techniques. The DDS is expected to continue to seek new support techniques and the Office of Personnel faces the need to develop more effective ways of improving rotational movement of employees throughout the Agency. Mid-level, as well as young professional employees share the desire to be free of career service structures should a challenging new job opportunity become available in the Agency. It is of interest to note that as of the end of October 1971, [REDACTED] of the Agency GS career service work force were being utilized in positions other than those of their own service.

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D. Modifying Present Agency Policy to Meet Changing Personnel Requirements

1. During December 1971 the Civil Service Commission officially cancelled the special authority granted Government agencies to make rapid promotions (to young professionals) in disregard of a specified time-in-grade. Throughout the Government the Office of Management and Budgeting has emphasized as a matter of policy that the average grade in agencies be cut and that lower-graded employees be utilized wherever possible to fill work responsibilities of higher-graded retirees. Thus, the Agency should view this as an opportune time to review and revitalize its personnel policies. The following considerations should be given a serious reading by managers and serve as a basis for determining what further action might be taken toward improving the Agency's posture as an employer.

a. Hire employees at slightly below previous levels, but with the expectation of utilizing them at the same level as before.

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b. Decrease professional input for FY 1972 and FY 1973 to:

(1) Facilitate both a lowering of average grade and overall on-duty-strength;

(2) Explore feasibility of using technical or clerical personnel where professional skills have not been fully used or necessary; and

(3) Permit reverification of the kind of personnel mix needed by the various services.

c. Maintain promotion rates for deserving young professionals to permit their growth and advancement from GS-07 to GS-11 within an approximate five to six year period while minimizing differences between the career services.

d. Utilize personnel more fully within grandfather services to:

(1) Decrease the need for accessions;

(2) Provide broadening experience for employees to enhance their skills and expertise;

(3) Cultivate greater job satisfaction and career interest among employees.

e. Reduce personal rank assignments to a minimum by not over-loading given job groupings through the increased use of the "temporary" promotion as well as closer monitoring of the Agency's input mix.

f. Identify the exceptional professional or managerial talent within the Agency for special executive development.

E. Attitudes of Young Professionals

1. Several of the suggested actions to be taken by Agency management have as part of their foundation employee attitudes, particularly as represented by the results of a survey conducted by the Psychological Services Staff of the Office of Medical Services in January 1970. There is little reason to believe that the more significant findings have been seriously modified in the interim. It is worth noting that in 1968 forty-seven Federal agencies surveyed the views of some 2000 young professionals in a study comparable to that of PSS/OMS, wherein there were [REDACTED] The results were similar in many respects.

2. In ranking 14 dimensions of job satisfaction, both sample groups were in complete agreement on the first three. The nature of the work itself was deemed most important, personal work accomplishment was listed as second most important, and opportunity for advancement was given third ranking. The Federal agencies' sample ranked salary fourth, while the Agency sample ranked it fifth.

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3. In view of these findings, it should be understandable that many of our young professional complaints or reasons for leaving the Agency relate directly to these dimensions of job satisfaction. Many young professionals feel overqualified for the job they are doing, many view their assignment as not meaningful, and others feel their responsibilities are not clearly defined. Salary level per se is not the primary concern of the young professional, according to these studies. It is reasonable to conclude that the employee's dissatisfaction with the job itself will provoke other complaints.

4. The Agency sample was made up of both sexes, of which about 40 percent were ex-Career Trainees. Over three-fourths of the group entered on duty at the GS-07 or above level, and all were hired initially to professional assignments (as defined by the MANS Code). Accordingly, the results of this survey point to the need for Agency management to consider courses of action which would increase the possibility for young professionals to experience greater satisfaction in their jobs. Twenty-six percent felt discouraged in their present job, and only 22 percent thought the Agency was doing a good job managing its newly hired young professionals.

F. Young Professionals and Their Early Job Experiences

1. One of the knottiest issues with which the Agency must come to terms is that of employee career management. According to the PSS Survey, "Most unfavorable comments were related to the general area of career development and personnel management" Over 50 percent of the employees indicated their ignorance of any one person or persons to whom they could go for counseling and advice. The report of the Committee on Professional Manpower prepared in 1968 noted that "None of the four Directorates operates a systematic career management and development program at the Directorate level."

2. Progress has indeed been made in this area in some career services, and special attention has been called to this matter under the recently recommended Personnel Movement and Management Program. The emphasis in the Program is the identification of the developmental needs of employees which should be met to enable them to perform more useful services and to grow in their careers. Lack of action in this area could result in a dearth of qualified and available individuals to fill the ever-increasing number of high-level vacancies created by a growing number of Agency retirements.

3. As indicated by both the Federal and Agency surveys, opportunity for advancement was the third most important dimension of job satisfaction. This is viewed as separate and apart from salary level. Some managers tend to view the granting of a salary increase as synonymous with advancement. However, unless the job the employee performs reflects growth in responsibility or status, a wage increase in and of itself will not necessarily satisfy his desire for advancement. The CT, for example, who

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is promoted from GS-08 to GS-11 rather quickly, but who experiences little sense of increased responsibility in his work, will most likely feel less than satisfied about his work situation. The job itself represents the most important concern of the young professional. It is clear that to hire professionals for work they construe to be demeaning or lacking in challenge is a more serious error than to be dilatory in providing them salary increases.

4. Some selected statistical data suggests the Agency's attention (or lack of it) to the issue of matching jobs and people.

a.		
<u>Date</u>	<u>% Professional Positions</u>	<u>% Professional ODS</u>
June 1970	55.3	55.6
June 1971	55.8	55.7
November 1971	56.3	56.4
b.		
<u>Total GS Accessions (% FY 1971)</u>		<u>Total GS Separations (% FY 1971)</u>
Prof.	30.2	40.3
Cler.	65.6	52.4

c. Numerically, in FY 1971 professional separations exceeded accessions by nearly 78 percent, while clerical separations exceeded accessions by slightly more than six percent.

d. There are few professional positions at the GS-07, GS-08, and GS-10 levels in relation to total positions at these Grades.

e. As of June 1971, the Agency had 5.2 percent [REDACTED] more employees than positions graded GS-07 through GS-11.

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G. The Promotion of Young Professionals

1. The question of time-in-grade and promotion rates is often a source of irritation to the young professional. He learns that policy and practice differ throughout the Agency. The following data are illustrative:

a. From CY 1965 through CY 1970 the Agency overall "mean" time-in-grade increased within the GS-07 to GS-11 range.

b. Of the professionals included in the Agency PSS Survey (all of whom entered on duty in 1964 or before) 40 percent were GS-11 or less five years later. Seventy-one percent of this group entered on duty at the GS-07 or above level.

c. Sixteen percent of the professionals in the PSS sample who entered on duty in 1958-1959 were GS-09's or GS-10's ten years later. Of those entering on duty in 1958-1959 all are presently over 30 years of age, and the great majority are 35 years of age or older.

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H. Rate of Development of Young Professionals

1. Another factor influencing the level of self-satisfaction experienced by the young professional is his age vis-a-vis his perceived rate of advancement. A large percentage of the Agency's professional input comes to the Agency in an almost euphoric frame of mind since they have reason to believe they are a select group having survived the tight screening imposed by the Agency high standards for employment. They are ambitious and quickly lose patience when frustrated in their desire to find "success" at a relatively early age. Considering the fact that many Agency professionals are well into their twenties when hired, the time frame for their expectations for success is rather short. More than one young professional has cited this as a reason for his resignation. Age characteristics of Agency GS-07 through GS-11 level employees are of interest; e.g., only 20 percent of GS-11 employees were below age 30 as of 31 December 1970. Other data show:

a. Between 1955 and 1970 the number of employees under 35 decreased 14.2 percent in relation to total on-duty-strength.

b. Over 40 percent of Agency employees between GS-07 and GS-11 are 25 to 35 years of age as of 31 December 1970.

c. At the GS-07 and GS-08 levels less than 15 percent of Agency employees are under 25 years of age as of 31 December 1970.

d. As of the end of June 1971, only 34 percent of GS-09 employees were less than 30 years of age (the average age at this level was 34.8). This GS level represents about 10.5 percent of the Agency's total GS population.

2. The question remains whether the Agency can provide the majority of young professionals the kind of experience necessary to satisfy their needs for advancement. The 1970 PSS Survey results clearly suggest that the young professional desires a stronger effort from management in attending to his career development. Many a young professional holds a predetermined time frame in mind for reaching certain GS levels in his climb up a career ladder.

3. Of a total of [REDACTED] EOD's acquired during FY 1970 and 1971 who were still on the roles at the end of each of these Fiscal Years, the following age distribution was noted:

<u>Age</u>	<u>% of EOD's</u>
Under 20	22.3%
20-24	41.6%
25-29	18.5%
30-34	6.7%
35-39	3.4%
40-44	4.0%
45-49	2.8%
50 and Above	.7%

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4. The percentages for each grouping were comparable for each of the two Fiscal Years, and over 60 percent of this input was assigned initially to TAS. It may be observed that over 17 percent of this group was 30 years of age or older at the time they entered on duty with the Agency.

5. The drastic decline in accessions of young employees during the late fifties is now reflected in a rather sizeable swale in the 1971 age curve for Agency GS employees at the 35-39 year age range. It is possible that the Agency will have to face a shortage of qualified, experienced middle level employees to fill top management positions in the next decade. Doubtless, the Agency wants to avoid future age humps in its employee population with all of its attendant problems.

6. The age and grade of young professionals vis-a-vis their educational background has special import with respect to their career potential. A number of young professionals anticipate through the acquisition of additional training, particularly a college degree, that they will enhance their earning capacity and raise their occupational goals. This has more validity at certain age and grade combinations than at others. Management must be cautious to avoid suggesting that ipso facto further education or specialized training by the employee will assure him greater Agency career prospects or guarantee him further promotions. Employees in their late thirties or early forties are particularly apt to be disappointed to find that the college degree they worked so hard to obtain did not immediately unlock a new career opportunity. Management must not overreact in its effort to deal more effectively with employee career development problems and in so doing provoke employees to entertain levels of aspiration which are clearly unrealistic, especially at a time when competition for advancement is growing and the size of the Agency is diminishing.

7. Some selected data reflect to some degree the Agency situation with regard to the employee under 30 years of age as of June 1971:

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a. Of [REDACTED] professional employees under 30 years of age, nearly one-fifth (18 percent) have only a high school education.

b. Of professionals under 30 years of age, 34.4 percent are females.

c. Over 65 percent of the Agency's male population at the GS-09 level and below are under 30 years of age, whereas about 95 percent of the Agency's female population at the GS-09 level and below are under 30 years of age.

d. Over five percent of the Agency's clerical population under 30 years of age have a college education.

e. About 40 percent of the professionals in the 20-24 year age range are females, while slightly over 22 percent of the professionals in the 25-29 year age range are females.

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I. The Personal Rank Assignment and the Young Professional

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25X1A 2. The present competitive promotion system foments personal rank arrangements, simply because long-term career problems or organizational occupational arrays are not thoroughly considered on those occasions promotions are made. In the clerical field, for example, as of 31 December 1971 both the DDP and the DDI Career Services had more secretaries at the GS-09 level (occupational series 0318.03) than authorized positions. Another example in the DDP is that of Records Admin Officers (0344.01); [REDACTED] positions at the GS-09 or above levels, for which there are [REDACTED]. It becomes clear that in the absence of functional interchangeability within various occupational series, an overload of personnel necessitates perpetual personal rank assignments for those employees excess to requirements. Admittedly, the number of authorized positions changes from time to time, but where changes are minimal or personnel transfers and appropriate reassignments are difficult to effect, the infusion of more people at a given grade than can be ordinarily accommodated does a disservice both to the employee and to the Agency. A comparison of major Directorate PRA's at the GS-11 level and below cites the extent of the practice as of 31 October 1971.

GS-11 AND BELOW PRA'S

<u>Directorate</u>	<u>No. PRA's</u>	<u>% Total PRA's</u>	<u>Mean Average Duration</u>	<u>Longest Continuous PRA</u>
DDP	[REDACTED]	26.7%	20.8 Months	GS-07 (8.9 Years)
DDS	[REDACTED]	37.8%	14.3 Months	GS-10 (5.5 Years)
DDI	[REDACTED]	25.0%	15.5 Months	GS-10 (3.4 Years)
DDS&T	[REDACTED]	36.7%	18.5 Months	GS-07 (4.4 Years)

J. Executive Development and the Young Professional

1. John Gardner in his book No Easy Victories expresses the thought that "... talented people are attracted to Government because it gives them the opportunity to render service to the entire nation. They come with the highest motives. They leave when their purpose is thwarted or when they begin to feel trapped. Government cannot afford to be inhospitable to such people." It is what occurs after the individual

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commences working in an organization that determines his longevity. The underutilization of a new professional tends to undermine his confidence in and respect for his superiors. Mr. Gardner observes " . . . that a great many organizations are badly managed and badly led. And because of that, people within those organizations are frustrated when they need not be frustrated. They are not helped when they could be helped. They are not given the opportunities to fulfill themselves that are clearly possible." The Agency should not take on more talent than it reasonably can use and should attend more to the developmental needs of those in whom it already has made an investment.

2. Although all of our young professionals have good credentials, only a limited number have the makings of a true manager. J. Sterling Livingston's article "Myth of the Well-Educated Manager" points to this fact. His article was distributed to those attending the December 1971 meeting of the Society for Personnel Administration. He emphasized two major theses. The first established that in studies relating to formal management education programs and their ability to produce characteristics essential to career success or managerial effectiveness, the results support the assertion that "there is no direct relationship between performance in a school or training program and records of success in management." Secondly, he stressed that there is increasing evidence that the characteristics necessary in a good manager are found as part of the personality structure of the individual and are not the consequence of a formal learning process. Mr. Livingston observes that many ambitious and highly trained individuals are motivated more for the prestige and the salary accorded management positions than by any desire to manage. He contends that an individual must have the will to manage to be a good manager and must have a strong need to influence the behavior of others.

3. Agency management has tended to openly convey to the extra-promising young professional that he represents tomorrow's manager. This is often done without any clear knowledge of the employee's real motivational base. Livingston cites three characteristics that he feels must be reasonably well present if an individual is to be a good managerial prospect. These characteristics are (1) a need to manage, (2) a need for power, and (3) the capacity for empathy.

4. With respect to the last ingredient, Livingston quotes from a study by Edgar H. Schein, who interviewed many graduates of the Sloan School of Management at MIT. These students represented young professionals about to embark on their careers. Schein concluded that on the whole there was a tendency on the part of these young people to "wish away the human side of an organization." They were inclined to " . . . talk like logical men who have stumbled into a cell of irrational souls," when encountering their first jobs. With this in mind, the Agency would be well-advised to reconsider the basic purpose of the Career Trainee Program, especially as it represents a pool of future Agency managers.

5. As presently conceived, the CTP's purpose is to select, train, and provide early career development for young professional officers who show unusual potential. Mr. Hugh Cunningham, the Director of Training,

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supports this view and offered the opinion that each Directorate should recruit the specialists it needs and the CT group should consist primarily of generalists who would "preclude its (the Agency's) becoming segregated into tribes speaking different tongues." Implicit in this particular concept of the CT Program is the notion that within this group the Agency's future managers are to be found. After all, the CT's were selected as generalists groomed to identify with the Agency as a whole, rather than with a specific Directorate; and they also were selected because of their high promise; i.e., more for their future utility and capability (presumably in a managerial role) than for their ability to meet current requirements.

6. This approach to the identification of managerial talent is clearly at odds with the message of Livingston and other researchers. Organizational managerial prospects ought to be identified from within; they should come from among those who not only have demonstrated their ability and career interest, but from those who have at least a measure of those "manager" ingredients suggested by Livingston. The Agency has been inclined to focus on applicants having strong academic records and a wide assortment of college extracurricular activities as those representing the best management prospects for development to meet rather distant and unknown executive requirements.

25X1A 7. Between 1962 and 1967, the Agency's input of CT's increased [REDACTED] It is plain that the Program during this period had become a major source of professional input and was not used exclusively as a source for management trainees. In recent times, because of the severe cutback in numbers, the Program has attempted to recapture some of the special stature afforded a highly selective, elite employee group given a special label.

25X1A9a 8. A sample survey made by [REDACTED] in April 1969 of attitudes of CT's who had been on duty about three years suggested that two special problems resulted from heavy external input to the Program. First, career prospects were viewed by the trainee as being inflated; i.e., many felt they were led to expect supergrade positions relatively early in their careers. Secondly, trainee input did not relate to real Agency work requirements; consequently, many were very disappointed in their assignments.

9. Internal studies have demonstrated that: (1) There are no significant differences in the job performance of non-CT's and CT's who have entered on duty in recent years, and (2) the highly selective basis for hiring CT's will not insure effectiveness in future leadership. Recruiting those needed to meet more immediate Agency work requirements rather than those individuals with so-called long-term potential would give the Agency a better opportunity to meet the young professional's need for a meaningful job situation and would serve to enhance the probability of his staying for a longer period as he weighs the question of an Agency career.

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10. When some 50 percent of ex-CT's who entered on duty between July 1951 and July 1960 are lost to the Agency by 1966, the loss both in terms of Agency security and personnel investment is considerable. The Agency should establish an internal mechanism for identifying and developing its future managers and the CT Program per se should give way to the direct hire of young professionals by the individual Directorates. After seasoning and the opportunity to sort out their personal career objectives, the remaining young professionals could then be more readily identified in terms of their managerial potential and an appropriate developmental scheme implemented.



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